

REMARKS

Amendments

Claims 1-7 and 17-19 are amended to use language in accordance with conventional US practice. Claim 19 is amended to depend from claim 17 to avoid duplication of claim 18.

Dependent process claims 8-16 are cancelled, without prejudice. New claims 20-23 are individually directed to the embodiments shown in Figures 1-4, respectively. See also original claim 2, page 7, lines 16, page 15, lines 6-12, page 17, lines 1-10, page 18, line 11-page 20, line 4, page 20, lines 12-16, and Figures 1-4. New independent apparatus claim 24 is an alternative recitation of an apparatus aspect of the invention that does not use means language. See, e.g., page 14, line 9-page 15, line 20, the original claims, and Figure 1-4.

Election

In response to the Election of Species Requirement, applicants hereby elect Species A, i.e., Figure 1. The apparatus claims that read on the elected species are claims 1, 2, 4-6, 17-20, and 24.

However, applicants disagree with the Examiner's comments regarding the absence of a generic claim. All of the embodiments shown in Figures 1-4 are encompassed within the scope of independent claim 1 (as well as new independent claim 24). Moreover, claims 4 and 5 are also generic to the embodiments shown in Figures 1-4.

See, for example, claim 2. This claim reads on the embodiments of Figure 1 and Figure 2. Claim 3 reads on the embodiment of Figure 2. Claim 20 reads on the embodiment of Figure 3, and claim 21 reads on the embodiment of Figure 4. Each of claims 2, 3, 20, and 21 are dependent on claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is clearly generic to Species A-D. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge that claims 1, 4, 5, and 24 are generic as to Species A-D.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

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